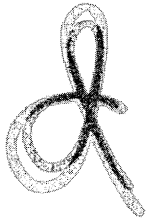
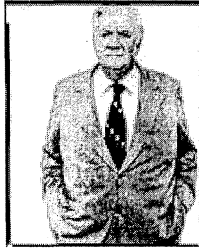


The Tip O' Neill Diaspora Award Nomination Form 2017



donegal
diaspora
pobal
domhanda



Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall
Donegal County Council

Introduction:

Tip O'Neill was a liberal Democrat and an influential member of the US House of Representatives. Throughout his long and distinguished career, he spoke to and for both the Irish community and all vulnerable residents in the United States. He firmly believed in the responsibility and capacity of government to bring about social change and its duty to resolve many social problems. In 1977, he denounced violence in Northern Ireland and used his influential position to become one of the most important US advocates, playing a key role for peace in Northern Ireland. His vision and his determination to make Ireland a better place were crucial in the negotiations that led to the Anglo Irish Agreement in 1985 and the establishment of the International Fund for Ireland.

The Tip O'Neill Irish Diaspora Award was initiated in 2012 as a means of commemorating the centenary of the birth of the late Tip O'Neill an illustrious grandson of Donegal emigrants and an eminent member of the Irish Diaspora. This award has gained momentum since the inaugural ceremony and has become a highlight of the Donegal County Council's calendar and Diaspora Initiative.

The Tip O'Neill Irish Diaspora Award is presented on an annual basis at a ceremony in Donegal to a member of the broad Irish Diaspora in recognition of achievements in their chosen field and can be given to an individual who has:

- Achieved eminence in their chosen careers, especially in business, commerce, industry and philanthropy.
- Made an outstanding contribution towards fostering a better understanding aboard of Donegal/Ireland and its civilization.
- Extended their support to Donegal/Ireland's causes and concerns.
- Made Donegal/Ireland proud by brilliant performance in their field of merit.
- Made a major contribution to Donegal/Ireland's success on the world stage.
- Given a meaningful individual contribution at community level.

The closing date for receipt of completed nomination forms is the 31st May 2017.

Marty Meehan
President, University of Massachusetts

Marty Meehan is the first undergraduate alumnus to lead the five-campus University of Massachusetts system. On July 1, 2015, he became the university's 27th president after serving in the U.S. House of Representatives and as chancellor of UMass Lowell.

Meehan has an abiding belief in public higher education's power to transform lives. At his presidential inauguration on Nov. 12, 2015, Meehan pledged to fight for UMass, which he called "the most important institution in Massachusetts in the critical areas of social mobility and economic growth."

Meehan made raising money for scholarships the centerpiece of his inauguration and generated \$1.7 million for scholarship funds on all five campuses. He also closed his congressional campaign committee, transferring its funds to an educational foundation and making a \$1 million scholarship donation to his alma mater, UMass Lowell.

Under Meehan's leadership and with his support and advocacy, UMass has reached new heights and achieved historic milestones. As of the 2016-17 academic year:

- Enrollment has reached a record 74,500 students
- Research expenditures have risen to a high of \$629 million
- Financial aid funding has increased to \$255 million, its highest level ever
- The university's statewide annual economic impact is measured at a record \$6.2 billion
- U.S. News & World Report now ranks all four UMass undergraduate campuses in the top tier of national universities - making it one of the few university systems in the nation with that distinction
- The UMass School of Law has earned full accreditation from the American Bar Association
- The UMass Foundation has divested its direct investments in fossil fuels, making UMass the first major public university to take such a significant action as a climate change initiative

Born in Lowell, Meehan was one of seven children in a family where the importance of education was stressed. After attending Lowell public schools, Meehan, a first-generation college student, graduated cum laude from UMass Lowell in 1978 with a degree in education and political science. He also earned a master's degree in public administration from Suffolk University in 1981 and a juris doctor from Suffolk University Law School in 1986.

Meehan embraced a career in public service early in his life. He served as the deputy secretary of state for securities and corporations from 1986 to 1990. In 1991, he became first assistant district attorney for Middlesex County, managing a staff of more than 150, including 80 prosecutors, and establishing an innovative "priority prosecution" policy that targeted hardened criminals.

Seeing an opportunity to expand his public service commitment and to serve his nation, Meehan ran for U.S. Congress and was elected to represent the 5th Congressional District of Massachusetts in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1992. He served on the House Armed Services and Judiciary committees and established a national reputation for his legislative leadership, winning praise for his efforts to protect the public from the health risks of tobacco. Meehan was a central figure in campaign finance reform and a major sponsor of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, known as the McCain-Feingold Bill in the Senate and the Shays-Meehan Bill in the House.

During his congressional career, Meehan was deeply involved with the Northern Ireland peace process. In 2000, he accompanied President Clinton and cabinet members on a mission to bolster prospects for a lasting peace in Northern Ireland. As a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on Irish Affairs, he cosponsored resolutions calling for a peaceful resolution to the conflict and the commencement of all-

party talks leading toward self-rule for the North. Meehan fought to break down trade barriers and stimulate strong business ties between the U.S. and Northern Ireland. Meehan was also a strong supporter of the MacBride Principles, a set of business guidelines for fair employment in Northern Ireland, to ensure that United States dollars do not subsidize anti-Catholic discrimination in Northern Ireland.

After serving 14 years in Congress, Meehan was appointed chancellor of UMass Lowell in 2007. He made quality, diversity, access and affordability keystones of his vision to raise his alma mater's reputation and impact. During his eight-year tenure, UMass Lowell's enrollment grew by nearly 50 percent and the university climbed into the top tier of U.S. News & World Report's best national universities rankings by improving its performance in every sphere of activity, including student success, fundraising and auxiliary revenue generation. His extraordinary achievements at UMass Lowell led to his appointment as president of the five-campus UMass system in 2015.

During his time at UMass Lowell, Meehan established the Center for Irish Partnerships in 2009. The Center fosters collaborations and partnerships with educational institutions in Ireland and Northern Ireland across an interdisciplinary spectrum including the social sciences, the natural sciences and engineering, the humanities and health and education fields. These international partnerships embrace faculty exchange and joint research ventures and to work with Irish partners to create a dynamic model for Cross-Atlantic collaboration that will promote and advance University of Massachusetts Lowell's goals to enhance the student experience by providing a global perspective to teaching and research, while contributing to Irish interests through exchange and service. Letterkenny Institute of Technology was an early partner of the Center for Irish Partnerships, and it is a partnership that has continued to thrive. In 2016, Meehan was invited to speak at the fifth annual Donegal-Irish Diaspora Conference, participating on a panel discussing the impact of the Irish Proclamation and what the signers envisioned for the future of Ireland.

Meehan's grandmother was a first cousin of Thomas Ashe and emigrated to Massachusetts from County Kerry in the early twentieth century.

Recognitions received by Meehan include; The Association of College Unions International (ACUI) 2014 President of the Year Award, the Chief Executive Leadership Award from Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) in 2012, and being named to the Top 100 Irish-Americans List for Irish America Magazine in 2003.